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Cinderella

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Cinderella

Brown Watson
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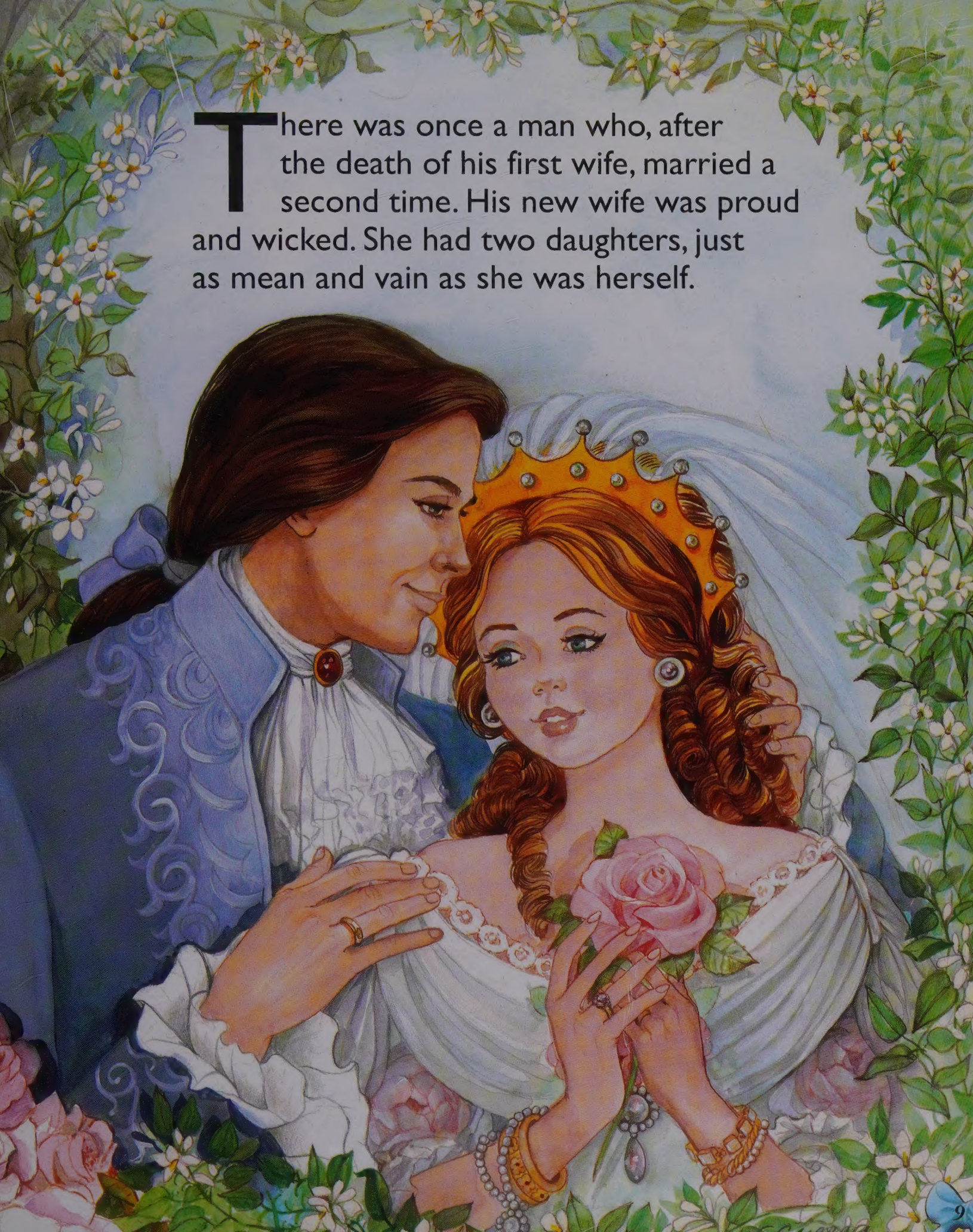
Princess

Cinderella



There was once a man who, after the death of his first wife, married a second time. His new wife was proud and wicked. She had two daughters, just as mean and vain as she was herself.

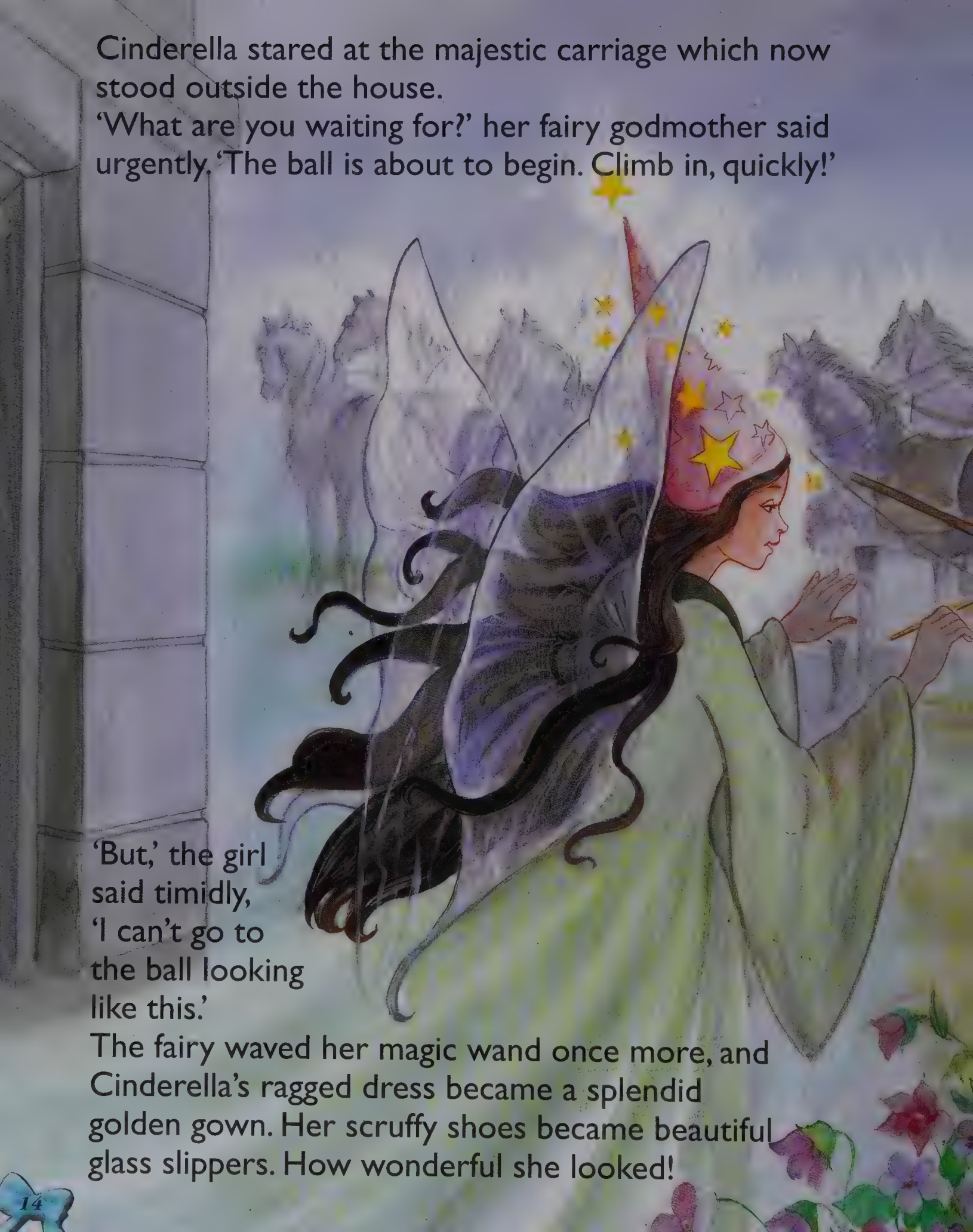
The widower had a daughter, who was not only beautiful but sweet and loving. Her jealous stepmother and stepsisters treated her like a slave. She worked all day long, cleaning, washing, cooking and ironing her stepsisters' fine clothes. While her stepsisters lived in luxury, she wore ragged clothes and slept on an old mattress. At night she liked to sit by the fireplace, near the cinders, and remember her dear mother, whom she missed so much. Her stepsisters and stepmother made fun of her, and called her 'Cinderella'.

All of the fine ladies and gentlemen were invited to a royal ball. The stepsisters wanted to look their very best, and poor Cinderella had to run back and forth, seeing to their clothes, hair and jewellery, as well as doing all the household chores. When they left for the palace, Cinderella stayed at home. She sat by the fire and wept, wishing she could attend the ball.

Suddenly, her fairy godmother appeared. 'Enough of those tears! Hurry to the vegetable patch, and bring me the biggest pumpkin you can find.' Cinderella dried her eyes and did as she was told. Her fairy godmother touched the pumpkin with her magic wand and turned it into a beautiful carriage.

With another touch of her wand she transformed six mice into horses, a rat into a coachman and some lizards into footmen.

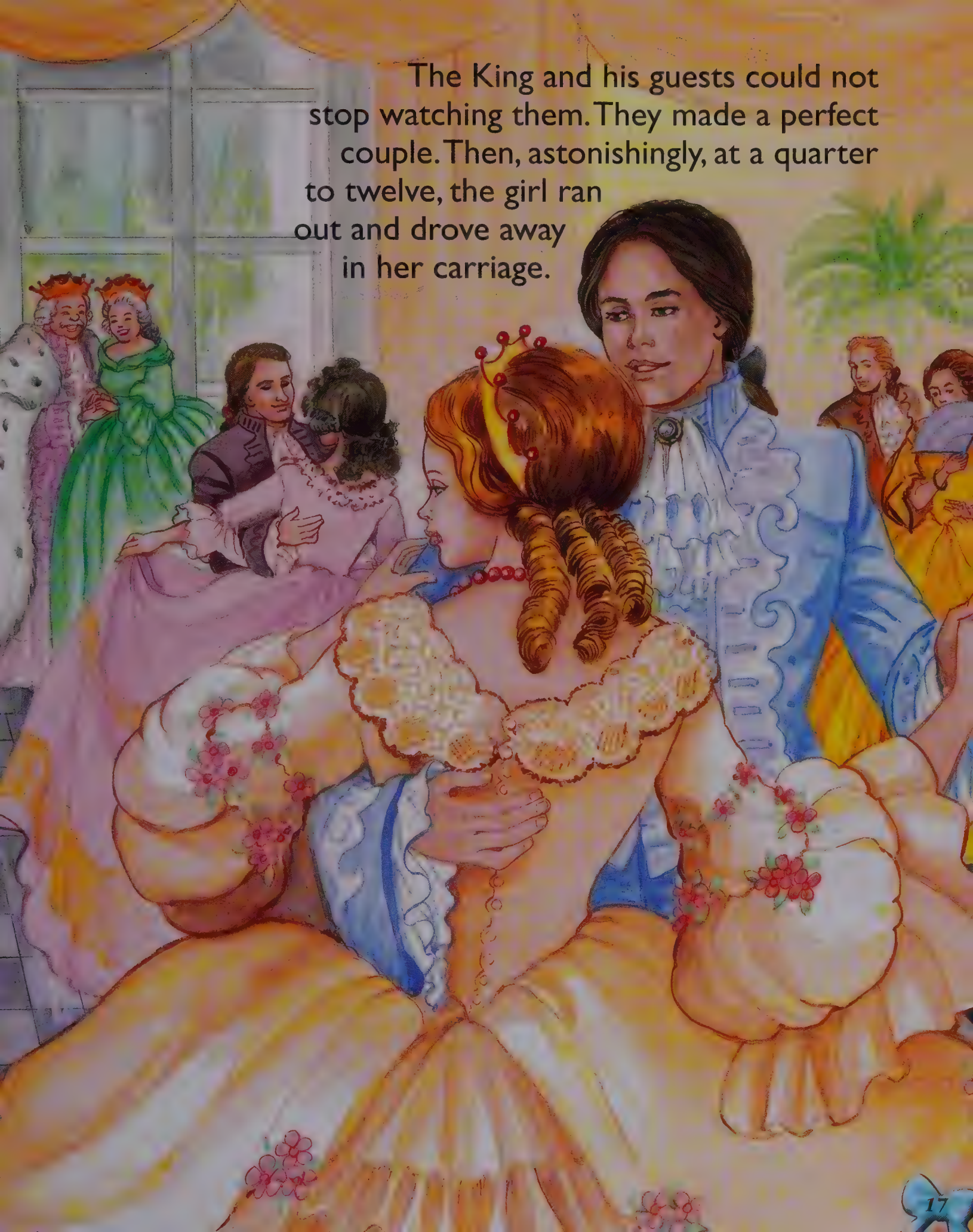
Cinderella stared at the majestic carriage which now stood outside the house.
'What are you waiting for?' her fairy godmother said urgently. 'The ball is about to begin. Climb in, quickly!'



'But,' the girl said timidly, 'I can't go to the ball looking like this.'
The fairy waved her magic wand once more, and Cinderella's ragged dress became a splendid golden gown. Her scruffy shoes became beautiful glass slippers. How wonderful she looked!

'You must return home by midnight.
At twelve o'clock, the magic will fade,'
her godmother warned.

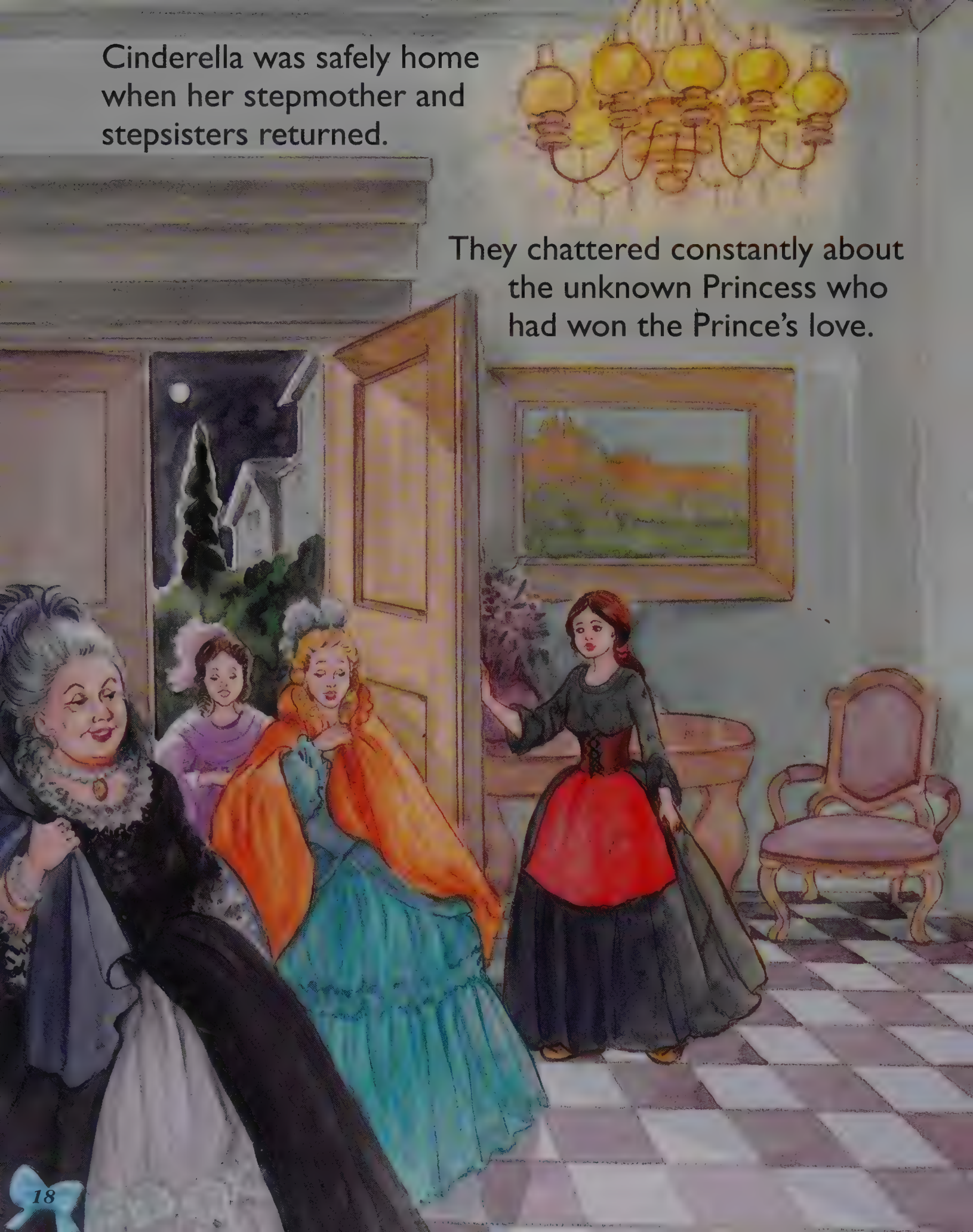
When Cinderella arrived at the ball, the Prince came out to meet her. He danced with her all night, and could not take his eyes off her.



The King and his guests could not stop watching them. They made a perfect couple. Then, astonishingly, at a quarter to twelve, the girl ran out and drove away in her carriage.

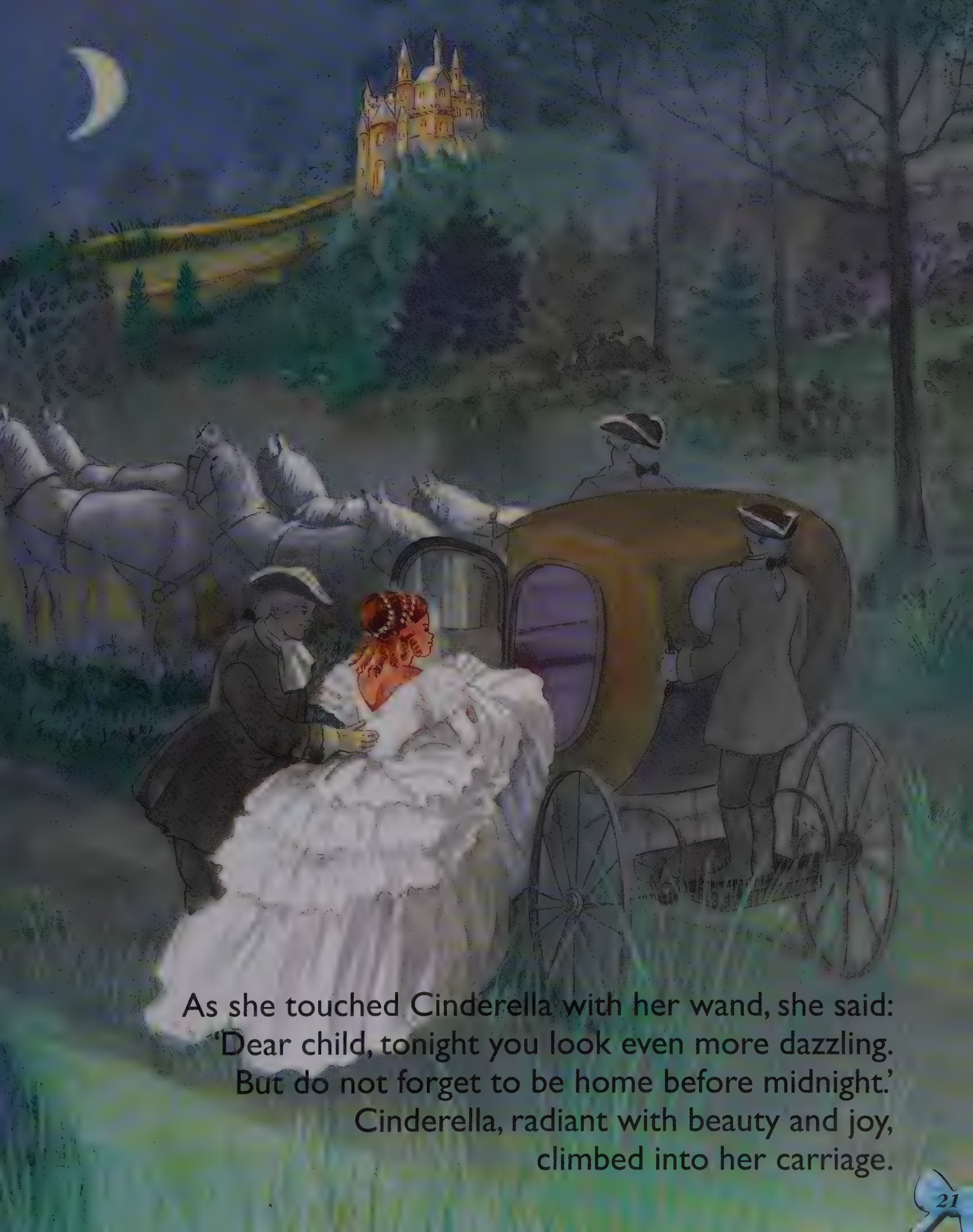
Cinderella was safely home when her stepmother and stepsisters returned.

They chattered constantly about the unknown Princess who had won the Prince's love.



Cinderella spent the next day preparing new gowns, sashes and petticoats for her sisters, who were going to another ball at the palace that night. They were very nervous, because it was rumoured that the Prince would announce whom he had chosen as his bride.

When, at last, Cinderella was left alone, her fairy godmother visited again, and with her magic wand she made the wonderful carriage appear, just as the night before.



As she touched Cinderella with her wand, she said:
'Dear child, tonight you look even more dazzling.
But do not forget to be home before midnight.'
Cinderella, radiant with beauty and joy,
climbed into her carriage.

The Prince was waiting at the palace door. They danced all night, and did not separate for a moment. Cinderella was so happy that she forgot to look at the clock. Suddenly, the twelve strikes of midnight began to sound.

Cinderella fled without saying goodbye. The Prince hurried after her, but all he found was her glass slipper. He asked the guards about the princess, but they had only seen a young woman in rags running away.

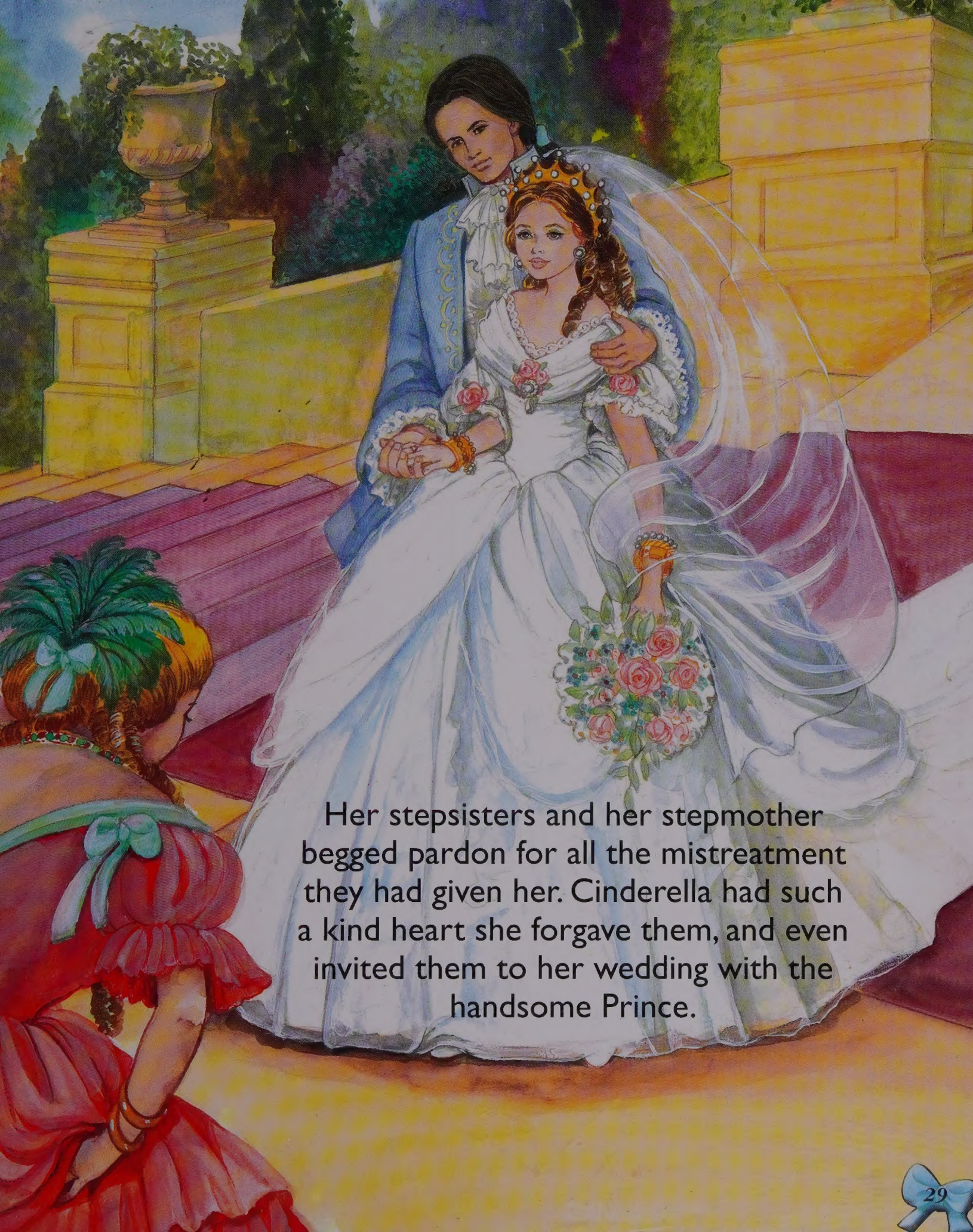
The King announced that the Prince would marry the mysterious owner of the glass slipper. It did not fit anyone in court, so a messenger was sent to every household. At Cinderella's home, her stepsisters tried desperately to fit their feet into the slipper.

'May I try it?' Cinderella asked timidly.

'Please excuse her,' said her stepmother. 'The girl must be out of her mind.'

'Of course you may try it,' said the King's messenger, and he put the slipper on her foot.

To the amazement of them all, the slipper fitted perfectly. Cinderella took the other slipper from her bag and put it on. Immediately, her fairy godmother appeared, and touched Cinderella with her wand. Everyone gasped as it became clear that she was the mystery dancer at the ball.



Her stepsisters and her stepmother begged pardon for all the mistreatment they had given her. Cinderella had such a kind heart she forgave them, and even invited them to her wedding with the handsome Prince.

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